

REMARKS

The helpfulness and courtesy of the Examiner during the telephone conversations with the undersigned on May 18, 2004, and May 24, 2004, are greatly appreciated. Applicant has followed the suggestions of the Examiner and, as will be set forth in greater detail below, has amended certain of the independent claims accordingly.

Claims 1-73 are pending in the instant application. Claims 11, 24, 36, 49, and 61 are allowed. Claims 9-10, 23-24, 34-35, 47-48, and 59-60 are objected to but are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. The remaining claims are rejected. Claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-15, 20-23, 25-28, 30-35, 37-40, 43-48, 50-54, 57-60, 62, and 64-73 are directly amended herein.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 9, 10, 22, 23, 34, 35, 47, 48, 59, and 60 have been objected to by the Examiner but have been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the elements of the base claim and all intervening claims. In response thereto, Applicant has amended each such claim to be in independent form in the indicated fashion. Such claims are thus submitted to be allowable.

Rejection Under 35 USC § 102(b) Over Takai et al. (USPN 4,993,659)

Claims 1-8, 12-21, 25-33, 37-46, 50-58, and 62-73 stand rejected on the ground of anticipation over Takai et al. During the aforementioned telephone conversations between the Examiner and the undersigned, the Takai et al. reference was discussed, as were independent Claims 1, 13, 26, 38, 51, and 65.

Upon further review by the Examiner of Takai et al., the Examiner indicated that the claims rejected on the ground of anticipation over Takai et al. were rejected on the basis that they recited an intended use of the recited subject matter. The Examiner went on to indicate, however, that the same subject matter, if recited as a method claim, likely would overcome the aforementioned rejection on the ground of anticipation over Takai et al.

In response thereto, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 13, 26, 38, 51, and 65 to be method claims, and it is respectfully submitted that such amendment overcomes the instant rejection thereof on the ground of anticipation over Takai et al. Withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

It is noted that claims 2-3, 5-8, and 12 have been amended to depend directly from Claim 10, which is submitted to be allowable. It is further noted that Claim 4 resultantly now depends indirectly from Claim 10.

It is further noted that Claims 14-15, 20-21, and 25 have been amended to depend directly from Claim 23, which is submitted to be allowable. Claims 16-19 resultantly now depend indirectly from Claim 23.

It is further noted that Claims 27-28, 30-33, and 37 have been amended to depend directly from Claim 35, which is submitted to be allowable. It is further noted that Claim 29 resultantly now depends indirectly from Claim 35.

It is further noted that Claims 39-40, 43-46, and 50 have been amended to depend directly from Claim 48, which is submitted to be allowable. It is further noted that Claims 41 and 42 resultantly now depend indirectly from Claim 48.

It is additionally noted that Claims 52-54, 57-58, 62, and 64 have been amended to depend directly from Claim 60, which is submitted to be allowable. It is also submitted that Claims 55, 56, and 63 resultantly now depend indirectly from Claim 60.

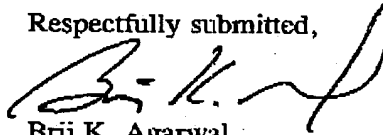
It is finally noted that Claims 66-73 have been amended to be method claims depending directly or indirectly from independent Claim 65, while reciting substantially the same subject matter as before.

It is thus submitted that the rejection on the ground of anticipation over Takai et al. has been successfully overcome. Withdrawal of such rejection is thus respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance as to Claims 1-73 is requested to be issued forthwith.
If any matters remain unresolved, a telephone call to the undersigned would be welcomed.

Respectfully submitted,



Brij K. Agarwal
Registration No. 43,507
Attorney for Applicants

Telephone Number:
(412) 566-6183